

PS 1449
C 553

P O E M,

READ AT THE

S O C I A L R E U N I O N

OF THE

Yale Alumni Association,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

FEBRUARY 22d, 1875.

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ALSO, POEM READ AT

THE BANQUET GIVEN TO CHIEF-JUSTICE WAITE,

By the Alumni of Yale College,

Washington, D. C., Monday Evening, March 2, 1874.

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BY

C. C. COX,

CLASS OF '35.

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GIBSON BROTHERS, PRINTERS.

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P O E M .

'Tis pleasant by the ingle's ruddy blaze
To spend an hour in talk of other days ;
Of childhood scenes; of her, the Mother dear,
Who shaped our course with shifting hope and fear,
Taught us those holy precepts, wrought on high,
By which we learn to live and hope to die;
Of her whose eye, still moistened by a tear,
Follows with eager love each life's career.
So we, the offspring of that ancient dame,
Our *Alma Mater*, whose familiar name
Lives in the hearts of thousands, far and near—
We, a small fragment of her sons, are here.
The parson leaves his sermon half complete ;
The judge deserts his awe-inspiring seat ;
The doctor grants his patient short relief ;
The lawyer lays aside his book and brief ;
Each drops his business for a little space,
Rubs out the wrinkles from his careworn face,
Brushes the cobwebs from his weary brain,
Old time ignores, and lives a boy again.
In this bright presence—some brief hours at least—
May no dark shadow linger near the feast !

Why not trace out the old ancestral tree ?
What son of Yale but boasts his pedigree ?
A glorious lineage—not of courts and kings,
Nor warrior chiefs, whose deeds the poet sings,
But of material, braver, sterner stuff ;

Courage that in the strife ne'er cried, "Enough;"
 A perseverance without halt or bound;
 Learning profound, by pure religion crown'd;
 Virtues exalted, sanctified by toil,
 That 'erst took root in old New England soil.

Roll back the scroll of time—two hundred years
 Have run their course, freighted with hopes and fears.
 In an old dusty ledger,* it is said,
 Where Gov'nor Eaton scored his meat and bread,
 Where "lambe skinnés," "worme seedes," "padlocks,"
 manifold,
 Were duly entered either "bought" or "sold;"
 ("*Laus Deo*" crowned the entries, and the date
 Was Anno Domini, sixteen hundred eight)—
 In that same ledger is a full report
 Of certain doings in the General Court,
 Spell'd in the fashion of the ancient lore,
 Dated November, sixteen forty-four.
 A Mr. Shepherd, preaching at that day,
 In Cambridge town, on Massachusetts Bay,
 Calls on New Haven Colony to aid
 The poor of Harvard College, and, 'tis said,
 That many, for Christ's sake and learning's, sent
 "A peck of wheat, or its equivalent."
 Atwater, treasurer, informs the Court
 'Twas in his power, by Rodman, to transport
 Full forty bushels to the College poor,
 And hoped quite soon to send as many more.
 Hence a new honor, much esteemed, was born,
 And styled, "Collector of the College Corn."
 In later times, (aside, I wish to say,)
 We used our *Corn* in quite another way.

* Baldwin.

These records show the broad and liberal zeal,
 The pure devotion to the common weal,
 The holy fervor, earnest and sublime,
 That mark'd the efforts of that early time.
 Well knew our fathers that to educate
 Is the first duty of the rising State;
 That learning and morality combined,
 The cultivation of the heart and mind,
 Construct the sure foundation, deep and wide,
 Of all a nation's glory, strength, and pride.

At length the Colonists, more sturdy grown,
 Resolved to plant a college of their own:
 Ten ministers, all orthodox and true,
 Met at New Haven, and the paper drew;
 And after, as the chronicle declares,
 These pious men lifted their hearts in prayers,
 Adjourned to Branford, where, in simple wise,
 They boldly launch'd the College enterprise.
 The form was this: each serious parson laid
 Some books upon the table wide, and said,
 "I give these volumes that before you lie
 To found a college in the Colony."

Then came the Legislature to their aid,
 And the great scheme for which they toiled and prayed,
 No longer drifting on the sea of fate,
 Was firmly chartered by the good old State.

The first Commencement—for the College grew—
 Was held in Saybrook, seventeen hundred two.
 Nathaniel Chauncey, on that lucky day,
 Bore all the honors of his class away;
 Not *primus inter pares*, for that year

Young Chauncey stood alone, without a peer ;
 In lore and scholarship surpassed by none,
 The leading graduate in a class of one !
 (To put that solitary student through
 Required a Rector, and a Tutor too.)

Twelve years of steady growth had passed, and more,
 When books began to swell the College store ;
 Davie and Drummer, Blackmore, Newton, Steele,
 Inspired by friendship for the coming weal,
 Sent scores of volumes, as the history goes,
 Standard and rare, in poetry and prose.

Just at this time two serious questions came,
 The *ubi* of the College and its *name*.
 Each town its offering sent in sterling gold ;
 Saybrook subscribed five hundred pounds, all told ;
 New Haven gave seven hundred, and the seat
 Of learning forthwith found her calm retreat.

In seventeen eighteen, so the records say,
 All strife had ceased, and perfect peace held sway ;
 A grand affair Commencement proved that year,
 Throng'd by admiring crowds from far and near ;
 The child was grown—already known to fame—
 And claimed a *habitation* and a *name*.
 First in the programme was proclaimed aloud,
 In classic language to the listening crowd,
 A long memorial, picturing in detail
 The many virtues of ELIHU YALE,
 And closing, 'mid the general acclaim,
 The College bore henceforth that honored name !
 Next the procession to the Meeting Hall,
 To hear a speech from Governor Saltonstall,

Prepared with care, and in the Latin tongue ;
 That over, certain good old Psalms were sung,
 And all there present joined with one accord
 In chanting loud hosannas to the Lord.
 A "splendid dinner" closed the eventful day—
 A day whose memories ne'er shall fade away.

Of the long pile that meets the stranger's gaze,
 Those faded relics of departed days,
 SOUTH MIDDLE rose the first above the ground,
 And cost in all at least two thousand pound.
 In that whole College structure, dingy, old,
 Two hundred thirty thousand bricks, we're told,
 Were used—in after days, no doubt,
 There were some *bricks* inside as well as out !
 South Middle ! ah, the thrilling screams at night
 That filled the timid freshmen with affright !
 The ghosts that wandered in and out its doors—
 The midnight scenes of students, on all-fours,
 Confronting dangers—what, I need not say—
 The bloody swarm resolved to keep at bay !
 How many in this very hour retrace
 The dark traditions of that noted place !
 What thrilling horrors o'er our memories steal,
 The page of history never can reveal !

Of these grave seniors who does not recall
 That costly humbug, known as "Commons Hall ?"
 An introduction from the British schools,
 Maintained and cherished still within their rules.
 Far in the past a common board was spread,
 The rations fixed by law so much *per head* !
 Huge pewter pitchers, filled with foaming beer,
 Were scattered o'er the table, there and here ;

And, since no glassware could be had in town,
 By "word of mouth" the malt was worried down.
Hash formed the breakfast meal on certain days—
 (" *Olla Podrida*," in the modern phrase,)
 A curious compound—but the word is mum—
 Cook'd half to death—known by the title "*Slum*."
 Scarce had the tutor said the accustomed grace
 When scenes of wild disorder ruled the place;
 Struggles for dishes, swiftly bolted food,
 Noises discordant, manners more than rude;
 While mugs and pitchers, coffee-pots by scores,
 With shattered crockery widely strewed the floors.

In eighteen nineteen protests filled the air,
 Fierce and indignant, 'gainst the College fare;
 Rebellions followed, till in forty-three
 The College fathers, by a wise decree,
 Wiped out the Commons—through long years a school
 For ruined health, and manners spoiled by rule.

How pleasant, had we leisure to portray
 The expanding glories of this later day!
 The throngs that through the College portals pour,
 Who tread the path so often trod before;
 Adjust the armor close, and strong, and bright,
 That fits the wearer for the coming fight!

Here let us pause, and trace, before we close,
 With honest pride, the swelling lists of those
 Who, high enrolled upon the scroll of fame,
 Have added luster to the College name:
 Divines and scholars, statesmen, lawyers, bards,
 Whose lives of toil have reaped their full rewards.
 Of theologic writers, who can cite

Three loftier minds than EDWARDS, TAYLOR, DWIGHT?
 Where deep and varied scholarship hold sway,
 Who will compare with PORTER, WOOLSEY, DAY?
 CALHOUN and BADGER, CLAYTON, MARSHALL, stand
 Among the proudest statesmen of the land;
 Of all the learned judges, who will rate
 Higher than STRONG, or our Chief-Justice, WAITE?
 PERCIVAL, HILLHOUSE, PIERPONT, WILLIS, wear
 In realms of song their chaplets green and rare;
 While in the practice of the healing art,
 STEVENS and KNIGHT have borne the noblest part.

How little did those modest men, and few,
 To whose first efforts so much praise is due,
 Ever imagine in that early day
 The vast improvements that our eyes survey!
 The splendid structures, illustrations rare,
 The throng of teachers, the increasing care,
 The crowds that seek each year with eager feet
 The halls where learning holds her ancient seat!
 Who can foretell the glory and renown
 Our *Alma Mater's* growing years shall crown,
 When, still expanding far on every hand,
 Her schools and lecture halls shall fill the land
 With able teachers, scholars, wise and great,
 To scatter learning and exalt the State?
 God speed her on the upward path—all hail
 The past, the present, and the future Yale!

Fain would I linger o'er a recent page,
 The noblest, brightest, proudest of the age;
 Fraught with achievements grander, more sublime,
 Than find a record in the march of time.
 What son of Yale, who watched the battle's tide

Ebbing and flowing o'er the country wide,
 Thrilled not to know his gallant comrades stood
 'Neath the old flag, a fearless brotherhood?
 Far in the van or on the rampart's sod,
 Striking for country, liberty, and God!
 At Shiloh, Lookout, Fisher, Mobile Bay,
 A hundred fields, in many a bloody fray,
 'Mid grape and shell our brothers fought—how well
 Let the dark history of the struggle tell.

Lift high the roll of honor, thick with stars!
 Some linger near us, ploughed by many scars;
 But some returned not from the scene of strife,
 Left where they sank, to save a nation's life.
 WINTHROP and HANNAHS, HEBARD, DUTTON, CAMP,
 ROBERTS and WHEELER, ceased the accustomed tramp,
 Fell from the columns of the advancing brave,
 And pass'd from triumph to a soldier's grave!

They dropped upon the rampart's verge, where shot
 were falling fast;
 Far on the front, where armies met, these brave men
 breathed their last;
 Or by the picket taken off, in hurried march they fell
 Unnoticed, in the mountain gorge, or lone, seques-
 tered dell.

Ideal captains led them forth—they heard the battle-
 cry
 Of Agamemnon,* cheering on to death or victory!
 Of Hampden bold, the people's pride, from Chalgrave's
 bloody plain,
 And onward press'd, with fearless step, despite the
 lead-en rain.

* *Vide* address of Hon. H. C. DEMING, July 26, 1865.

What if no lettered stake may mark their place of
lonely rest?

The memory of their deeds shall live in many a patriot
breast;

Long as the starry banner's folds o'er land or ocean
fly,

The men who bore that flag aloft, though lost, shall
never die.

Bright eyes grew dim and cheeks turned pale by many
a dreary hearth,

Dark shadows fell where all before was joyousness
and mirth;

Stern time still runs his ceaseless round, the seasons
wax and wane,

But they who left in hope and pride will never come
again!

The year's first blossoms, bright with dew, above the
turf shall spring,

And singing birds beside the sod their sweetest carols
sing;

But far more fragrant than the flowers that greet the
morning light,

The deathless names of those who fought for coun-
try and for right.

When did the scholar seek the tented field,
Lay down the pen, take up the warrior's shield;

Leave cloister, study, pulpit, bench, or bar,

And court the perils of uncertain war?

Abjuring all the fondest hopes of life,

Unblanch'd and fearless, plunge into the strife?

When did the soldier make the welkin ring

With Pindar's lyrics, or exultant sing
 Through forest paths, or marching to the sea,
 Old "*Gaudeamus*," and the "*Upidee?*"
 When has a College, famous for its lore,
 Renown in war and arms e'er reaped before?

O ye, who learning's gentle paths pursue,
 The war has left a nobler work for you!
 From distant graves a voice spreads far and wide
 "PRESERVE THE LAND FOR WHICH WE BLED AND DIED!"
 A healthy public sentiment create;
 Lift up the masses, guide the affairs of State;
 In letters is a dignity and power
 To mould the nation in its darkest hour:
 That the Republic may forever stand
 Sow schools and churches broadcast o'er the land!

Here, on this birthday of the nation's pride,
 The *Pater Patrie*, honored far and wide,
 Let us renew our fealty to the land
 Our fathers rescued from the tyrant's hand;
 Whose flag still proudly floats on every sea,
 The hope, the stay, the watchword of the free!
 Let us reflect that educated mind,
 By pure religion strengthened and refined,
 More than all other agencies create
 The sure, enduring bulwark of the State.

P O E M ,

Read at the Banquet to Chief-Justice Waite, March 2, 1874.

"All honor to Yale!" I was thinking to-day,
As this sentiment fresh from my heart found its way,
How each year of exile but linked us the more
To its dear honored halls, its bright pictures of yore.

And yet what strange changes have passed o'er the
scene
Since our young feet first traversed the old College
green!

Dear objects have vanished and left not a trace—
Loved landmarks our memories still fondly embrace.

South College yet lingers; but where is the shop
Where English sold mince-pies and patties and pop?
Our *Suaviter* Townsend has laid by his shears,
And Dow's Corner Pharmacy fled with the years.

O'er the old canal-bed rings the voice, loud and shrill,
Of the train-waking echoes in valley and hill;
While the fair rural charms that once captured the
heart
Have gone—and instead, lo! a wide-spreading mart!

But, whatever the changes, our mother's the same,
And her sons share the glow of her far-reaching fame;
Wherever they rove, on mount, prairie, or vale,
Their hearts turn with fond recollection to Yale.

As Alumni we meet, and whatever to-night
 May be said of our ages, these hearts are as light
 As when down the church aisle we passed with a
 stride,
 Our cheeks flushed with triumph, our hearts filled
 with pride.

How snowy soever these temples, or bare,
 How furrowed these brows with the traces of care,
 No life-blighting shadow has here any right—
 Though Seniors this morning, we're Freshmen to-
 night!

On this evening, dear friends, when the honors are
 due
 To the class that brings Evarts and Pierrepont to
 view,
 Of the number already enrolled with the great,
 We hail, above all, our Chief-Justice—but wait,

He cannot be suffered to pass with a line—
 True merit we know never struggles to shine,
 Nor seeks its own glory—but Time in his flight,
 Will as surely bring virtue and genius to light.

'Tis a lesson of patience and toil in pursuit
 Of one study, one calling—lo! here is the fruit!
 Empty guerdons he sought not, but swept with a
 bound

O'er the ladder of fame to its highest top round.

Thus a modest young soldier, to millions unknown,
 In the plain path of duty moved silent, alone,
 Till the whole country suddenly caught up his name,
 And Ulysses S. Grant filled the world with his fame!

But others are here full of honors and years—
 Welcome guests at our board, whom the nation re-
 veres,

(Their robes laid aside for this festival night,)
 The bulwarks of Freedom, of Justice, and Right.

The Court here assembled, in talent and worth
 Stands the noblest judicial tribunal on earth;
 And our dear *Alma Mater*, it won't be denied,
 Has something to do with its glory and pride.

For without her own sons its brave judges among
 It is certain the Bench could have never been Strong;
 And, however recondite and learn'd and sedate,
 It is equally clear it would ne'er have had Waite.

But hist! be respectful—don't make such a noise—
 There's the Prex—don't you see him?—just there with
 the boys!

Hide quick the decanters—elongate each face—
 And you, sir, the soberest, pretend to say grace.

Who's afraid? Let's invite him to join in the *fête*.
 Introduce him! "Allow me, sir, Chief-Justice Waite;
 Also Roberts and Shoemaker, Kellogg and Dawes,
 Once under your ruling—they now make the laws."

All welcome, the guides of our dear College days!
 Add affection's green leaf to their merited bays,
 And weave in one garland each long cherished name,
 "Noah Porter and Woolsey"—twin brothers of fame!

But a truce to this rhyming—come, fill up the glass—
 Let us seize the brief moments, and quaff ere they
 pass,

An old-fashioned bumper, with hearty all hail
To our loved *Alma Mater*—dear time-honored Yale!

God grant that her children, however renowned,
May be true to themselves and their old classic ground!
And when they have weathered the last grand as-
size
May they reach more exalted rewards in the skies!

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